(19)

DSI-80-C-00099

DDB-2680-108A-80

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (MIS), VOLUME VIII LATIN AMERICA (U)

DECEMBER 1980

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

~~NOFORN~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (MIS), VOLUME VIII
LATIN AMERICA (U)

DDB-2680-108A-80

Information Cutoff Date: 1 October 1980

This publication supersedes
MIS-Volume VIII, September 1980,
(DDB-2680-108-80)

This is a Department of Defense Intelligence Document
prepared by the Western Division,
Directorate for Research,
Defense Intelligence Agency

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

CLASSIFIED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES
DECLASSIFY ON
REVIEW ON 1 OCTOBER 2000

PREFACE

~~(C)~~ The Military Intelligence Summary (MIS), published in eight volumes, is a synopsis of military intelligence worldwide. Intended to serve as a ready reference, the MIS presents a compilation of intelligence on those forces which contribute to the military security of each country, and on the political and economic factors affecting the country's military capability. Published semi-annually, the MIS serves to update information in other DIA publications.

(U) Unless otherwise indicated, the information in volumes IV and VIII is that available in DIA as of 1 April and 1 October. The data cutoff date for the other volumes is 1 January and 1 July.

(U) Information summarized in the MIS is available in detail in numerous DIA publications. A list of related publications, both completed and scheduled, is published in the Register of Intelligence Publications (DDS-2600-37-80) and the Defense Intelligence Production Schedule (DDM-2600-35A-79). The Intelligence Users Guide (DDP-2600-397-78) explains how to obtain finished intelligence products and services from DIA.

(U) Word processing was provided by DB-3X Word Processing Center.

(U) Questions and comments concerning this publication should be referred in writing to the Defense Intelligence Agency (ATTN: DB-3E), Washington, D.C. 20301. Requests for additional copies should be forwarded through command approval channels, as appropriate, to DIA (ATTN: RTS-2A), using DD Form 1142, Interagency Document Request, in accordance with DIA Manual 59-3, DIA Reference Library.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORIENTATION MAP

ARGENTINA
BOLIVIA
BRAZIL
CHILE
COLOMBIA
CUBA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EL SALVADOR
GUATEMALA
GUYANA
HAITI
HONDURAS
JAMAICA
MEXICO
NICARAGUA
PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
URUGUAY
VENEZUELA

Page determined to be Unclassified
Reviewed DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
IAW EO 13526, Section 3.5
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

1. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Political-Military Situation: Guatemala is a republic with a popularly elected President and legislature. The military is a pervasive part of the system of government, both national and local. The current level of military influence is considered high and is not expected to diminish for the foreseeable future. The current President, Maj Gen Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia, was inaugurated on 1 July 1978 for a 4-year term. The two retired military officers who opposed him in the election have left the country, thus removing a potential cause of factionalism in the military officer corps while facilitating loyalty to Lucas among military officers.

(~~S/NOFORN~~) President Lucas' record to date has not been impressive. His administration has made few policy innovations, and its performance thus far places it well within the conservative mold of its predecessor while being far more repressive. Lucas himself has not provided inspirational leadership, the level of competence of his Cabinet is weak, and administrative corruption is high. More attention is being paid to socio-economic problems and major infrastructure projects, however.

~~(S/NOFORN)~~ Early in its term the Lucas government served notice that it would not tolerate public demonstrations lacking prior authorization. This set the stage for clashes with labor and other leftist opposition organizations that had grown bold during the more permissive years of ex-President Laugerud. An October 1978 incident brought out one urban problem. A protest over the announcement of a 5-cent increase in the bus fare (from 5 to 10 cents) was followed by widespread strikes and labor unrest. Protest activities carried out by leftist students and political and union groups degenerated into rioting. Lucas finally reacted to heavy criticism from the various sectors that had backed his campaign and ordered the police to move with firmness against strikers and protesters to bring the 9 days of violence under control. Had the disorders continued, they would have posed a serious threat to the Lucas government's hold on power. In this instance, the military stood back and permitted Lucas to use the National Police to deal with the problem. The rioting was curbed, but the bus fare has remained at 5 cents.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Human rights continue to suffer from the Government's inability to deal effectively with high levels of violence. During the period Lucas has been in office, anticriminal "death squads" have flourished. There is also mounting evidence of Government complicity in political murders and disappearances carried out by the "Secret Anti-Communist Army." Violent acts against political and labor personalities have increased markedly since the October 1978 crisis. Government actions in dealing with the latter protest resulted in the dismantling of most public sector labor groups. Prime targets for right-wing violence are the San Carlos University community, labor leaders, left-leaning journalists, and opposition politicians ranging from the center to the extreme left.

~~(C)~~ During 1979 and especially since the 31 January 1980 seizure of the Spanish Embassy and the subsequent police assault, the extreme left, particularly the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), has increased terrorist activities in both urban and rural areas. The success of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and the supposed progress of the subversive campaign in El Salvador

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

seem to have emboldened the Guatemalan insurgents to step up their activities --bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and attempted assassinations of military and government officials, businessmen, and armed actions against the Army--while at the same time causing intense alarm among the extreme right. Consequently, the Government is experiencing growing pressures from both extremes. Thus far it has resisted overreaction, relying on police forces to cope with the situation. Military forces operating in the heavily Indian-populated Quiche Department have experienced several clashes with armed EGP groups. As their casualties grow and terrorist activities intensify, internal military sentiment advocating more aggressive action has increased. The need of the Government to withstand mounting pressures from the extreme right, keep the Armed Forces under control, and deal effectively with the extreme left and internal social imbalances presents a severe challenge to the Lucas administration. Government success in dealing with such challenges will depend to a large extent upon the success of the junta government in El Salvador in dealing with its internal problems. A weakening of the spirit of Guatemalan subversives would reduce some of the pressure on the military and extreme right.

~~(C)~~ Other issues the Lucas government must address are inflationary pressures on the poor (12-20 percent per year for the past 5 years) and growing labor militancy demanding increased wages/benefits and improved working conditions. Recent increases in the minimum wage leading to increased labor costs could accelerate farm mechanization and result in future rural unemployment.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ In the area of political rights, the first new political parties in 10 years have been certified during the first year of the Lucas administration. A total of 14 new parties have filed applications, and as of September 1980, 4 had been certified, including 1 leftist party, the Frente de Unidad Revolucionario--United Revolutionary Front (FUR). The leader of this party and former Mayor of Guatemala City, Manuel Colom Argueta, was murdered in March 1979, several days after his party attained certification. This and the murder of Social Democrat leader and former Foreign Minister, Alberto Fuentes Mohr, 2 months earlier, have been setbacks to attempts to open the political field to obtain wider choices and more open elections.

~~(C)~~ The mid-1976 resurgence of extreme left terrorist activities has increased in intensity. The EGP, in alliance with the dissident wing of the Guatemalan Communist Party, has been the most active group. A new group, the Organization Revolucionario Del Pueblo En Armas--Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), appeared in 1979. ORPA activities have expanded from propaganda outpourings and harassing actions against farms in the south coast region to direct clashes with the military as far afield as the Lake Atitlan region. The recent increase in terrorist actions on a broad front suggests that the extremist movement is becoming more cohesive. Prodded by the Cubans, the four main guerrilla/terrorist organizations have publicly declared unity of purpose, although internal frictions continue. Objectives appear to be aimed at discrediting the Government, provoking Government repressive actions, making the military appear weak, creating alarm among the private sector, and agitating labor disputes (the latter two to disrupt the economy).

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

~~(C)~~ The Army continues to maintain a two-battalion force in the northern Quiche Department for counterinsurgency operations and to provide security and support for newly established agricultural cooperatives in the region. There have been numerous clashes with armed and uniformed EGP insurgents resulting in casualties on both sides, with the Army's toll being higher. The Indian population of the region has been increasingly restive, claiming to be victims of Government neglect and Army repression. The Government, with military participation, has launched an extensive development effort to improve conditions for the Indian population of the region. Strong-arm Government tactics have made few friends in the Quiche, however.

(~~C/NOFORN~~) A major item of Guatemalan national preoccupation is the future status of neighboring Belize (formerly British Honduras), a United Kingdom dependency. Guatemala claims sovereignty over Belize based on territorial exploration by Christopher Columbus and on Spanish colonial government jurisdiction. UK claims are based on the establishment of a colony in 1638 by shipwrecked British sailors. The British would like to grant independence to Belize and withdraw British forces, but fear that if they do, Guatemala will invade Belize and annex the territory. The Guatemalan Government fears the advent of independence and the withdrawal of British military forces because it believes that Cuba will influence the Belize Government and obtain permission to use the territory to infiltrate supplies and manpower to Guatemalan insurgents. (The present Belize Government is aware of these fears and is doing nothing to encourage Cuba.)

(~~C/NOFORN~~) Relations with the UK have been sporadically tense for many years over the Belize independence issue. In June 1977, certain inflammatory statements by Guatemalan officials resulted in the British increasing their Belize garrison. Guatemala responded by preparing for a conflict. The situation was very tense in July 1977, but a productive round of negotiations managed to relax tensions. It appears that Guatemala would accept, in principle, the existence of an independent Belize, provided that Guatemala were ceded some Belizean territory. Statements by Guatemalan Government officials beginning early in 1978 indicate that a relatively small cession of land in southern Belize would be acceptable to Guatemala. The Lucas administration's stance on the issue is similar to that of the former Laugerud government--recognition that total annexation of Belize is impossible and a willingness to settle for a small territorial concession. Nevertheless, the Lucas government does not seem to be anxious to sacrifice the country's historical claim just to put the issue to rest. The British have maintained that any cession of Belizean territory could occur only if acquiesced in by the Belize Government and people. Belize continues to opt for independence with territorial integrity. The negotiations continue, but indications are that the Guatemalan Government senses it has more to gain by employing the tactic of delay than displaying an active interest in resolving the issue.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Traditional good feelings toward the United States soured among the military in 1975 when the US would not sell C-47 aircraft to Guatemala. Relations worsened in March 1977 when it became known that the US Secretary of State's report to the US Congress on human rights criticized Guatemala for past abuses. Considering this to be strictly an internal Guatemalan affair, the Government responded by rejecting all US military aid and all purchases of military equipment that were conditional on the issue of human rights. Late in 1977, the Guatemalan Government attempted to purchase F-5 aircraft from the US. After some delay, the request was denied. In 1978, Guatemala expressed an interest in purchasing T-34 aircraft from the US to support the Air Force pilot training program that had begun in February 1979. Although they were provided with pricing data, they chose to purchase a similar aircraft (Pilatus PC-7) from Switzerland. Aware of the US arms transfer policy and reluctant to lose face by a turndown on requests to purchase major items through Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Guatemala has turned to other suppliers. Despite this, they are keenly interested in acquiring F-5 interceptor aircraft, UH-1H helicopters, C-130 aircraft, and naval patrol boats from the US. It is doubtful that formal requests will be initiated for FMS purchase of any of these items until a signal is received revealing a change in US arms transfer policy. In recent years, non-US suppliers have sold Guatemala more than $31 million of military equipment.

(~~C/NOFORN~~) Toward the end of the Laugerud administration, Guatemala requested permission to resume participation in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. This request was received too late for consideration in the FY 79 IMET program but was included in FY 80 legislation in the amount of $250,000. In late March 1979, the Guatemalan Government was informed through the local press that the House of Representatives had deleted Guatemala from IMET because of its human rights record under the Lucas administration. This drew strong anti-US reactions from Guatemalan Government officials, including suggestions that the US Military Group should be asked to leave the country.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ The Government is preoccupied with the fear that the Cuban-supported Sandinista success in Nicaragua, and the potentially explosive situation in El Salvador, will lead to intensified internal security problems for Guatemala. President Lucas has met with the President of Honduras and Salvadoran junta members to discuss the situation and has provided limited economic aid in an effort to help rebuild Nicaragua's local business and middle class. Relations with Nicaragua, which were never warm, have grown more strained, in part because of that country's endorsement of independence for Belize, its public embrace of Arafat and the PLO, and its militant Sandinista rhetoric. The situation in El Salvador is more complex. The Guatemalans are willing to support any anti-Communist regime. The current El Salvadoran regime, however, is perceived as being extremely unstable, and the Guatemalans are unsure exactly how to help prevent leftist elements from seizing control.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

(~~S/NOFORN~~) Guatemala's Armed Forces are capable of defending the country against invasion by any of its Central American neighbors. They could conduct successful small-scale operations against El Salvador, Honduras, or Belize, providing only that British forces were not present in the latter. The Guatemalan Army appears to be making a concerted effort to replace much of its obsolete equipment with new arms purchased mainly from Belgium, Israel, Portugal, South Korea, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Taiwan. This seems to be part of a three-fold program designed to update its forces; to be armed as well as, if not better than, its Central American neighbors; and to be prepared for action, if necessary, to cope with the internal security threat of increasing leftist insurgency.

(~~S/NOFORN~~) The Guatemalan Armed Forces are weakened by a top-heavy senior officer corps, absence of a career program for NCOs, and much obsolete equipment. Traditionally dependent upon the US for arms, Guatemala has been seeking new sources. Thus far, major items purchased from non-US sources are Galil rifles, RBY armored cars, and field kitchens--all from Israel; 5.56-mm ammunition from Portugal, South Korea, Belgium, and Israel; Pilatus PC-7 aircraft from Switzerland; and an unknown number of 105-mm howitzers from Yugoslavia. The Armed Forces are currently interested in acquiring air defense artillery, mortars, armored cars, utility vehicles, naval patrol craft, helicopters, and transport and fighter/interceptor aircraft. Interest in acquiring new equipment is designed to update Guatemala's military forces rather than to improve military capabilities for possible actions against Belize.

(~~C~~) The Armed Forces are experiencing a shortage of junior grade officers. The Escuela Politecnica (Guatemalan Military Academy), in Guatemala City, despite the change in 1979 from an eight- to seven-semester curriculum, has not been producing sufficient graduates to satisfy major officer requirements. To overcome the shortage, the following actions have been taken:

-- The military law was changed in January 1980 to permit reserve officers to attain the grade of lieutenant colonel. Previously, captain was the highest grade authorized for a reserve officer. This change is seen as an inducement for reserve commissioned graduates of the Adolfo V. Hall schools to opt for active duty. Guatemala has five of these 4-year military secondary schools, which are administered jointly by the Ministries of Education and Defense. Previously, very few graduates came on active duty.

-- In January 1980, concurrent with the change in the Army law, directors of the A. V. Hall schools were directed to contact recent graduates and recruit them for active duty. Sixty volunteered. A special 10-month course was established at the Center for Military Studies (CEM), with emphasis on staff functions and small-unit tactics, to help the volunteers enhance their general military knowledge.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

~~(U)~~ The Armed Forces of Guatemala have no special forces-type units as such. The nearest approximation to such a unit is the airborne battalion. The Armed Forces operate a kaibil (ranger) training center at La Polvora in the Peten region of the country. Each infantry battalion has a kaibil platoon, which may be deployed as a separate small unit. These platoons are used as cadre for training other conscripts in insurgency and counterinsurgency techniques and tactics. The Air Force sends personnel to the kaibil school for survival training.

2. (U) Key Officials:
President: Maj Gen Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia (Army)
Minister of Foreign Relations: Rafael Castillo Valdez
Minister of National Defense: Brig Gen Angel Anibal Guevara Rodriguez (Army)
Army: Chief of Staff, Brig Gen Luis Rene Mendoza Palomo
Navy: Commander, Capt José Antonio Contreras Roca
Air Force: Commander, Col Carlos A. Morales Villatoro
National Police: Director General, Col German Chupina Barahona

3. ~~(U)~~ Military Budget: $74,700,000 for fiscal year ending 31 December 1980; 5.8 percent of the central government budget and 0.8 percent of estimated GNP. No service allocation is available. Dollar value converted from quetzales at the exchange rate of one quetzal equals $1.00.

4. (U) Population: 6,954,000 as of 1 January 1980
Males (ages 15-49): 1,574,000; physically fit, 1,025,000; 74,000 reach military age (18) annually
Ethnic Divisions: 41.4 percent Indian, 58.6 percent Ladino*
Literacy: About 30 percent

5. ~~(U)~~ Army:
Personnel Strength: 14,000 (1,100 officers, 1,730 NCOs, 7,760 privates, 2,840 specialists, and 570 students and cadets).
Reserve: 35,000 semitrained.
Major Units: 5 brigades (1 infantry battalion each), 11 separate battalions (4 infantry, 1 airborne infantry, 1 military police, 1 engineer, 2 training, 1 transportation, and 1 Presidential Guard Battalion). In addition, a 400-man tactical group is stationed at La Aurora Airbase for airport security.
Major Equipment: 14 105-mm howitzers, 12 75-mm pack howitzers, 12 106.7-mm (4.2-inch) mortars, 5 M113 and 5 M113A1 armored personnel carriers, 10 RBY Mk. 1 armored personnel carriers (Israel), 15 M8 armored cars, and 7 Cadillac Gage V-100 armored cars. In addition, there are items in the inventory that are of questionable combat effectiveness because of age, including 4 M3A1 armored cars of World War II vintage and 7 World War II M3 light tanks considered so obsolete as to be useless. The Army currently is working on the M8 armored cars, including the installation of new engines, to make them more effective. Apparently 105-mm howitzers have been acquired from Yugoslavia to

---

* (U) Westernized Indian, Mestizo, and whites.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

replace the unsupportable 75-mm pack howitzer. Two of these howitzers have been in-country for more than a year, and recent use of the Yugoslav howitzers for determining ammunition purchase selection indicates that the decision has been made to purchase additional Yugoslav howitzers.

6. ~~(C)~~ Navy:
Personnel Strength: 535 (40 general service officers, 5 Marine officers, 205 general service enlisted, and 285 enlisted Marines).
Reserve: None.
Ships: 1 fast patrol craft (PCF) (32-meter), 10 patrol boats (PB) (2 25.9-meter, 5 19.8-meter, 1 19.2-meter, 2 12.2-meter), 2 river/roadstead patrol boats (PBR) (11-meter), 1 medium landing craft (LCM), 1 miscellaneous auxiliary (AG).
Units: The Navy is a small patrol force with two naval bases (one on the Caribbean and one on the Pacific). Each base is assigned one Marine company. The first company is based at Navy Headquarters, Puerto Tomas de Castilla, on the Caribbean, and consists of five platoons. The fifth platoon, however, is detached to the newly established second Marine company located at the Pacific Naval Base in Sipacate. This new Marine company consists of at least two platoons. It was established to provide the Pacific Base Commander with an improved capability to exercise control over his assigned area of responsibility and provide security during the construction of new port facilities at San José.

7. ~~(C)~~ Air Force:
Personnel Strength: 470 (65 officers, 405 enlisted), including 70 pilots.
Reserve: None.
Units: 4 squadrons (1 fighter, 1 transport, 1 helicopter, and 1 maintenance).
Aircraft: 79 total: 12 jet (10 A-37B fighters, 2 AT-33 trainers); 22 turboprop (trainers--12 Pilatus PC-7s*; transports--9 Aravas, 1 C-12 Super King Air); 28 prop (12 transports--1 DC-6B, 11 C-47s; 4 utility--3 Cessna 206s, 1 Cessna 180; 12 trainers--12 Cessna 172s); 17 turbine helicopters (utility--6 UH-1Hs, 3 Alouette IIIs, 2 Lamas, 4 Bell Jet Rangers, 2 Bell 212s).

8. ~~(C)~~ Paramilitary:
None. (The Civil Police consist of two distinct forces, both subordinate to the Minister of Government.)
Personnel Strength: National Police - 5,570; Treasury Police - 1,058.

9. (U) Key US Officials (all in Guatemala City except as indicated):
Chief of Mission: Chargé d'Affaires Melvin E. Sinn
Chief, AID Mission: Eliseo Carrasco
Defense Attaché and Army Attaché: COL George E. Maynes
Naval Attaché (Mexico City): CAPT Thomas M. Murdoch

---

* ~~(C)~~ Only one Pilatus PC-7 aircraft is configured for weapons delivery (rockets and 250-lb bombs).

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

Military Group Commander and Chief Army Section: COL Donald R. Ley
Chief, Air Force Section: Lt Col Nicholas A. Schillen, Jr.
Joint Logistics Officer: MAJ Michael L. Brown, USA

10. ~~(S)~~ Foreign Military Presence:

Israeli Military Advisers: Unknown. It is believed that only one maintenance representative remains in-country providing the Guatemalan Air Force advisory assistance in the maintenance of the Arava aircraft.

Swiss Military Advisers: Unknown. While it is definitely known that there is no Swiss Air Force pilot in-country, there may possibly be a Swiss technical representative in Guatemala providing advisory assistance in the maintenance of the Pilatus PC-7 aircraft.